

## WHERE'S THE BODY?

(JOHN 20:1-9)

All four Gospel accounts mention Mary Magdalene as visiting the tomb of Jesus on Easter morning.

We might note that, in John's account, she does not report to the two male disciples that Jesus is risen from the dead, only that Jesus' body is missing. Simon Peter does not conclude that the resurrection has taken place after running to the grave of Jesus. The reason for this is that the empty tomb is no proof of anything: it can only tell us that "he is not here"; it cannot supply the reason for this situation. People come to believe that Jesus "is risen", apart from one exception, through an encounter with the risen Jesus or through an angel, a divine messenger, that is, through revelation, not from human deduction or hearsay.

The one exception is the anonymous other disciple, "the one Jesus loved", who does come to believe without any personal meeting with the risen Lord. What enabled him to perceive the true reason behind the scene in front of him was his relationship with Jesus: this individual has been highlighted in the second part of the Gospel, in which the self-giving love of Jesus for his disciples has been stressed and illustrated by his washing of the disciples' feet.

The mention of the linen burial cloths and head covering recalls the Johannine account of the raising of Lazarus, who came out of his tomb still wrapped in his funeral sheets and had to be released from them. The Fourth Evangelist is telling us that Lazarus was restored to the life he had lost: the resurrection of Jesus is of a different order altogether. ■

### SAY

The Lord is truly risen,  
alleluia!

(from one of the Entrance  
Antiphons of the Mass on Easter  
Sunday)

### DO

Today is the greatest feast in the Christian year: celebrate it accordingly!

### LEARN

No one, including the soldiers on guard in Matthew's account, actually saw Jesus rise from the tomb.

"The disciple Jesus loved" is the figure at the source of the Johannine tradition and therefore of great importance in the Fourth Gospel.

Mary Magdalene is the only constant factor in the stories of the women's visit to the tomb of Jesus.



Mary Magdalene: detail from "Deposition of the Cross" (1927) by P. Verkade, in Carmelite Church, Dobling, Vienna

### REFLECT

The male disciples of Jesus are often criticised or ridiculed for not believing the women when these female disciples tell them that Jesus is risen. However, the New Testament tells us that the testimony of the first disciples, on whose testimony belief in the resurrection of Jesus depends, is founded on "a personal experience of the risen Lord". Paul claims to be as much of an apostle as the likes of Peter on this very basis. The empty tomb is no proof, as we see from the Gospel narratives themselves: for example, Mary Magdalene will soon mistake the risen Jesus for the gardener and ask him what he might have done with the body. It is only when Jesus speaks her name that the joyful truth is revealed to her.

Those who enjoy detective stories will appreciate that the empty tomb is not a proof of the resurrection, but is in some ways a consequence of that event. The reason, according to the Christian scriptures, must come from divine revelation, from God: this is supplied either through angels or by the risen Jesus himself.

This means that each of us has to decide for her- or himself whether or not to believe in the resurrection: no one saw Jesus rise from the dead, despite the purely imaginative pictures in many stained-glass windows and illustrated Bibles. ■

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia.  
You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia.  
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge,  
alleluia, alleluia.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

O God, who on this day,  
through your Only Begotten Son,  
have conquered death  
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,  
grant, we pray, that we who keep  
the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection  
may, through the renewal brought by your  
Spirit,  
rise up in the light of life.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Acts 10:34, 37-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: "You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses – we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead – and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name."

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 117

Response:

**This day was made by the Lord;  
we rejoice and are glad.**

or

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

1. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.  
Let the sons of Israel say:  
"His love has no end." (R.)
2. The Lord's right hand has triumphed;  
his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds. (R.)
3. The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.  
This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes. (R.)

**SECOND READING**

Colossians 3:1-4

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians.

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Alternative second reading**

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

**SEQUENCE**

**Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer  
sacrifice and praise.**

**The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;**

**and Christ, the undefiled,**

**hath sinners to his Father reconciled.**

**Death with life contended; combat strangely  
ended!**

**Life's own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign.**

**Tell us, Mary: say what thou didst see upon  
the way.**

**The tomb the Living did enclose;**

**I saw Christ's glory as he rose!**

**The angels there attesting;**

**shroud with grave-clothes resting.**

**Christ, my hope, has risen: he goes before  
you into Galilee.**

**That Christ is truly risen from the dead we  
know.**

**Victorious king, thy mercy show!**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed;  
let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord.**  
**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL**

John 20:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb" she said "and we don't know where they have put him."

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES**

Dear brethren (brothers and sisters), through the Paschal Mystery we have been buried with Christ in Baptism, so that we may walk with him in newness of life. And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded, let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church. And so I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan?

**I do.**

And all his works?

**I do.**

And all his empty show?

**I do.**

Do you believe in God,

the Father almighty,

Creator of heaven and earth?

**I do.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son,

our Lord,

who was born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered death and was buried,

rose again from the dead

and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**I do.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and life everlasting?

**I do.**

And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ,

who has given us new birth by water and the

Holy Spirit

and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins,

keep us by his grace,

in Christ Jesus our Lord,

for eternal life.

**Amen.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Exultant with paschal gladness, O Lord,

We offer the sacrifice by which your Church

is wondrously reborn and nourished.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Christ our Passover has been sacrificed,  
alleluia;**

**therefore let us keep the feast with the  
unleavened bread**

**of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Look upon your Church, O God,

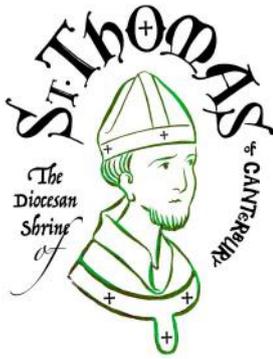
with unfailing love and favour,

so that, renewed by the paschal mysteries,

she may come to the glory of the resurrection.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# NEWSLETTER



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

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Web Site: <https://stthomasofcanterbury.com> St Thomas of Canterbury

Parish Priest: Canon Anthony Charlton email: [anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk)

Assistant Priest: Fr John Howard

email: [johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk)

Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): OPEN SUNDAYS FROM AFTER 9.30 MASS UNTIL 12 NOON

University of Kent Chaplaincy: Fr Tom Herbst (01843 230 774) email: [tjherbst@gmail.com](mailto:tjherbst@gmail.com)

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: Miss Lisa D'Agostini (01227 462539)

St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Exec Prin: Mr M Walters; Academy Prin: Mr J Rowarth (01227 826200)

The Parish Office is Closed & Linda is working from home. Linda can access emails via the church email so please contact her this way initially.

## ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED

8.00 pm: The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night  
- Colin Stone on his birthday

**Sunday 4th Apr: EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD** Jn 20: 1-9

8.00am: Helena Tomala - RIP (*Dabrowska Family*)  
9.30am: Frances & Michael-Joe Keavney (*Mary & Geraldine*)  
11.00am: David Heap - RIP (*Christine Heap*)  
6.00 pm: Luisa Piccarretta (Serv. of God) - RIP

**Monday 5th Apr: Mon in Octave of Easter** Mt 28:8-15  
**PUBLIC HOLIDAY**

10.00 People of the Parish  
Church open for Mass only

**Tuesday 6th Apr: Tues in Octave of Easter** Jn 20:11-18

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
12 noon: M Abraham - RIP (*Jomon Family*)  
6.00pm: Live-streamed Prayer

**Wednesday 7th Apr: Wed in Octave of Easter** Lk 24:13-35

7.30 am: NO EARLY MORNING MASS  
10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
12 noon: Stephen Slaughter - RIP  
6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

**Thursday 8th Apr: Thurs in Octave of Easter** Lk 24:35-38

7.30 am: Graham Carvath - RIP (*Geraldine & Edwin Yates*)  
10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
12 noon: N J Abraham - RIP (*Jomon Family*)  
6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer

**Friday 9th Apr: Friday in Octave of Easter** Jn 21:1-14

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
12 noon: Patrick Browning - RIP (*Philippa Burniston*)  
1.00pm: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
6.00pm: Live streamed Prayer  
7.30pm: NO EVENING MASS

**Saturday 10th Apr: Sat in Octave of Easter** Mk 16: 9-15

10.30am - 11.30pm: Reconciliation  
10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration  
12 noon: Joan & Maurice Crosland - RIP (*Margaret Guye*)  
6.00 pm (Vigil): Bishop Charles Henderson - RIP

**Sunday 11th Apr: Second Sunday of Easter** Jn 20:19-31

8.00am: People of the Parish  
9.30am: John & Jackie Thackray - Thanksgiving on 50th Wedding Anniversary  
11.00am: for Martina's Private Intentions  
6.00 pm: for Darlene Letey's Private Intentions

## PARISH MATTERS

### Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Luisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Barbara Brett, Mary Dittrich, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Lucy Purbrick, Josie Carr, Simon Lam, Sr Anne Bross (formerly of our parish), Pippa Swan, Fr John Slater, Jennifer Lang, Pauline Lilford, Barbara Markham, Patricia Gray, Patrick Sellars, Fr Kevin Alban O.Carm, Sr Margaret McGrath, Angela Nichols, Jean Boyce

### Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Patricia Collins, Andrzej Czupkowski, Chris Bateman, Pia Iannacci, Antonio Iannacci, Ellen Fitzgerald, Anna Koeller, Fr Michael Gwinnell, Ann Sexton, Paulina Manfredini, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Theresa Ramsundar, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Margaret Willis, Rev Paul Saunders, Sylvia Guy, Pat Gill, Baby Layla Green, Paul Card, Alan Skeet and Rodolfo Ignacio

### Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are this month:

John Todd and Maria Prado

### COLLECTIONS: Our retiring collections:

**This weekend: 3/4 April: Easter Offering:** Please note that ALL COLLECTIONS at the Easter Vigil and at Easter Sunday Masses, are for the direct benefit of the priests of our parish. There are Easter Offering envelopes at the back of the church and in the Foyer

**Next weekend: 10/11 April:** No second collection

### HCPT (Virtual) Easter Pilgrimage Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Can't travel? Join our HCPT family. We are really excited to share with you the programme of events for the 2021 HCPT Virtual Easter Pilgrimage. It's for adults and children, live and catch-up.

A highlight of the programme will be a child centred cartoon version of the story of Bernadette, hopefully a lovely bedtime story, which will be a world premiere on Easter Monday evening at 6.00pm. Another first is our five-episode series "Pilgrimage to Priesthood", in which we meet recently ordained Fr Paschal who shares his story with us.

Finally, and also new for us, at 9pm each night we will be conducting night prayers, which we are calling "Zoom Prayers on the Stairs"

Please go to our [website: www.hcpt.org.uk/virtualeaster](http://www.hcpt.org.uk/virtualeaster) and our [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages to see all the content, especially if you can't join us "live" each day. Happy Easter

## From Fr Anthony ...

TIME is different for all of us. We ring dates on our calendar that are significant and important to us and our family. Birthdays, weddings anniversaries, and dates our loved ones died. This year some of you might have ringed the 12th April because it is when restaurants and pubs will be allowed to serve customers outdoors. Also non essential shops, hairdressers and nail bars will also be opened. "It all depends on Data. Not dates" we are told. But as disciples of Jesus, the date we will circle is this Sunday 4th April. For us this is the greatest feast of the year. It is the day that Christ rose from the dead. The day that Christ conquered death and gave us life without end. I was quite moved by the what the Her majesty the Queen said last year at Easter in the midst of lockdown. She said that we need Easter more than ever in these times of Covid 19. "In church, one light would pass to another, spreading slowly and then more rapidly as more candles are lit. It's a way of showing how the good news of Christ's resurrection has been passed on from the first Easter by every generation until now." One of my favourite writers is Thomas Merton, an American Trappist monk who died in 1968. He said that Easter is not sufficiently understood if we think of it only as a time when we affirm our belief that Jesus rose from the dead. "This celebration does not merely recall the act by which we were liberated, it revives our freedom itself, in the renewal of the mystery on high we become free. No longer will we rely on following the law to be free. It is Christ that has set us free through his death and resurrection. We now live by the Spirit of him who raised Christ Jesus from the dead and by that Spirit we" put to death the deeds of the flesh, we will live. (Romans 8:13).

For the next fifty days of the Easter season we reflection on the implications of the Jesus bodily resurrection has for us. We believe that our lives are not heading for annihilation or oblivion but towards a glorious happy fulfilment beyond death. Jesus said: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I shall come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be." (John 14:3).

At the Easter vigil we blessed the new baptismal water. We will baptise Robert tomorrow at 10am Mass. This baptism is not a mere initiation ceremony into the Church community. It is a plunging into death, and a rising to new life. All those baptised at at Easter become a new creation. The resurrection of Jesus makes a difference to our lives today. We receive the gift of God's love, freely and unmerited. There should be nothing any longer that keeps us in fear. We have been set free and God's love has triumphed. Because of the resurrection the life of every human being has the potential of being transformed. We can experience renewal and new life because Jesus has conquered death. For us we celebrate Easter in springtime. Nature itself becomes a symbol of resurrection and renewal. The trees, flowers, shrubs and birdsong all proclaim for us new life, and victory over darkness and death. This applies to us who live in the northern hemisphere.

Here are some lovely words of a Greek hymn "Come ye Faithful".

'Tis the Spring of souls today:

Christ has burst his prison;

And from three days' sleep in death,

As a sun hath risen.

All the winter of our sins,

Long and dark is flying

From his light, to whom we give

Laud and praise unending.

Our prayer this Easter is:

*O God, who on this day, through your Only Begotten Son,  
have conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity,  
grant, we pray, that we who keep the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection  
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit, rise up in the light of life.*

### **Seeking Marriage & Family Life Bereavement Support Trainers:**

The Marriage and Family Life team are seeking volunteers who would be interested in being trained to train others in Bereavement support ministry at parish and deanery level. An introductory meeting will take place remotely, **via zoom** from 10am to 11am, on Saturday 8th May. Please email Elizabeth Partridge at: [mflbereavement@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:mflbereavement@rcaos.org.uk) to register and receive the zoom meeting joining details. Subsequent online training meetings are planned. Further details at the introductory meeting.

### **THE BIBLE TIMELINE COURSE**

Understand the Bible from start to finish, the Old and New Testament, with this **FREE OF CHARGE**, worldwide-famous course delivered online LIVE by Mauro Iannicelli. Starts on **7th April 2021** at 7pm (Eight Wednesday evening sessions). Info & Registration: [www.comeandsee.org](http://www.comeandsee.org)

### **DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:**

*Sunday, 18 April - Parish Annual General Meeting at 4.30pm*

The Passage's mission and work is developing to cope with more people becoming homeless. It is raising funds through the Big Give until Wed 31<sup>st</sup> March to support **No Night Out** a new initiative to take newly homeless people off the street straight away. Further details of the work is at [www.passage.org.uk](http://www.passage.org.uk).

**Double your Donation, Double your impact.** This is a matched giving scheme for online donations. If someone (can be company, individual or trust) gave £10 online matched giving of £10 would bring the Gift up to £20 (and for individuals to £22.50 with Gift Aid with higher rate tax relief it may cost the donor less than £10). For more information ring Andrew Hollingsworth 020 75921886 [andrew.h@passage.org.uk](mailto:andrew.h@passage.org.uk)

Donate at <https://tinyurl.com/NoNightOut>

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This weekly eNewsletter also shares additional information from around the Parish.